

18. *PARRA GYMNOTOMA*, Wagl. ; *Sci. & Salv.*, Ibis, 1859, p. 231.

19. *PHAETON FLAVIROSTRIS*, Brandt, *Mém. Ac. St. Pétersb. Sc. Nat.* iii. (1840), p. 263, t. iii. f. 1, 2.

Gulf of Nicoya (*Arcé*).

The Ornis of Costa Rica, as regards numbers, will now stand as follows :—

Number as given in Mr. Lawrence's Catalogue, with Appendix.	511
Additions given by myself (Ibis, 1869, p. 319) less two also included by Mr. Lawrence	13—2 11
Additions now given	19
	—541
Deduct 6 Veraguan Humming-birds, not yet recorded from Costa Rica proper	6
Also 14 species, mentioned in my paper (Ibis, 1869, p. 318)	14
<i>Capito hartlaubi</i> , now shown to be the female of <i>C. bourcierii</i>	1
	— 21
Total remaining	<u>520</u>

It must be observed that the orders *Grallæ*, *Lamellirostres*, *Steganopodes*, and *Pygopodes* of Mr. Lawrence's catalogue are but poorly represented; indeed the *Laridæ* are altogether omitted. Considerable additions may be anticipated amongst the members of these orders, which are known to frequent the coasts of Central America.

VIII.—Notices of Recent Ornithological Publications.

OWING to the large number of works published within the last nine months which demand our attention, the notice we can accord to them must necessarily be far more brief than we could wish, and in several instances we cannot attempt to give such an abstract of their contents as many of them deserve.

1. ENGLISH.

The first portion of Mr. George Gray's 'Hand-List'*, the in-

* Hand-List of Genera and Species of Birds, distinguishing those contained in the British Museum. By G. R. GRAY, F.R.S. &c. Assistant

tended publication of which we had the pleasure of announcing in our last number (*Ibis*, 1869, p. 464) has just appeared; and we do not hesitate to place it, though the most recent in point of time, at the head of our long list. Its importance we are sure will be fully recognized by every working ornithologist, and for working ornithologists it is especially intended. It has reached us so very lately that we will not attempt any criticism of it; indeed, to criticize this work properly would require an amount of labour certainly not less than that which the author has given to its preparation; and, moreover, a commentary upon it could easily be made to occupy at least a whole volume of this *Journal*. We strongly recommend Mr. Gray's 'Hand-List' to our readers, not that we would have them believe that we regard it as free from spot or blemish, but because we think that by their assistance many of its imperfections—imperfections some of them, we must add, inseparable from a work of this kind, may be removed, since we have good reason for saying that its author will gladly receive any suggestions or corrections of errors that may be pointed out to him with a view to amendment in the event of a second edition being required. It is perhaps needful for us to observe that, in forming an opinion of this book, ornithologists must be careful to consider not what, according to their own ideas, its scope might have been, but what its scope is. Mr. Gray, we understand, has for many years past been in the habit of keeping for his own private use, in the discharge of his public duties, a manuscript list containing the name of every genus or species of bird, entering each as it was described, with a reference to the plate in which it was figured (should that have been the case) and the locality whence it came. Finding this list of great assistance to himself, he thought that, if published, it would be of service to others, and being also called upon for a new edition of his well-known and exceedingly useful 'Catalogue of the Genera and Subgenera of Birds,' which is now out of print, he determined upon taking the steps necessary for offering his own private 'Hand-List' to the public. The result we have

before us, and extremely grateful are we to Mr. Gray for it. Omitting synonyms, it enumerates 1497 genera and subgenera, and 6057 species, while a few more of each are added in the "Errata and Appendix," bringing the whole up to the time of printing off the last sheet, the beginning of December, we believe; and this first part, we understand, comprehends, as near as may be, one-half the entire work. The second part, we are told, is in a far-advanced state, and we confidently look forward to being able to congratulate the author on its completion in the course of the year. Mr. Gray, in his numerous publications, has set such an excellent example to others by almost invariably including an index to the genera and species mentioned in them, that we trust he will not omit that indispensable adjunct to the present work, where it is undoubtedly most urgently required, and we hope he will kindly pardon our suggesting the want.

Among the "untiring divinities" of the ornithological Olympus, few have known less rest than Mr. Gould; but during the past year he has, if we are not mistaken, outdone any of his previous labours—to say nothing of those of his compeers. Here is a list of them:—

Part II. of the second edition of the 'Monograph of the *Trogonidae*,' published "March 1st, 1869," contains figures of:—

Pharomacrus pavoninus. Brazil.	Harpactes hodgsoni. India.
Prionotelus temnurus. Cuba.	— ardens. Philippine Islands.
Trogon elegans. Honduras.	— kasumba. Malacca, Sumatra,
— surucua. Paraguay.	Borneo.
— aurantius. Brazil.	— reinwardti. Java.
— viridis. Trinidad, Northern	— mackloti. Sumatra.
S. America.	— orescius. Java.
Troctes massenæ. Guatemala,	
Costa Rica.	

But it is fair to add that the plates representing the oriental species are reproduced from the 'Birds of Asia,' though the letterpress accompanying them is rewritten.

Part XX. of this last-named work, published "April 1st, 1869," gives us portraits of:—

Coracias indica. India.
 — *affinis*. Assam, Siam, &c.
 — *temmincki*. Celebes, Moluccas.
Phasianus reevesi. China.
 — *colchicus*. Caucasus, Asia Minor.
Cerionis temmincki. China?
Pucrasia xanthospila. North China.

Turnix dussumieri. India.
Dryomochares stellatus. Nepaul.
Anthus cervinus. N. Asia, N. Europe.
Emberiza fucata. China, Japan.
 — *rustica*. N. Asia, N. Europe.
Glycospina huttoni. India.
Regulus himalayanus. India.
Glareola lactea. India.

Part V. of the "Supplement" to the 'Birds of Australia,' published "August 1st, 1869," and completing the first of the additional volumes of that magnificent work, which will for all time carry its author's name down to posterity, includes:—

Strix candida. Queensland, India.
Pitta mackloti. Cape York, New Guinea.
Ptilonorhynchus rawnsleyi. Queensland.
Orthonyx spaldingi. Queensland.
Artamus melanops. S. Australia.
Eopsaltria leucura. Cape York.
Monarcha albiventris. Cape York.

Ptilotis notata. Cape York.
 — *cockerelli*. Cape York.
Sittella striata. Cape York.
Casuarius australis, Cape York.
 — *uniappendiculatus*. New Guinea?, Salawatty.
Rallina tricolor. Cape York.
Gallinula ruficrissa. Queensland.

All these species but two, it will be seen, come from the northern part of Australia, and especially from the Cape-York district, in Queensland, the youngest of our southern colonies. *Strix walleri*, Diggles (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1868, p. 118), proves, on a comparison of specimens, to be the well-known Indian species *S. candida*, Tickell, and is accordingly here figured under that name. Referring to a suggestion formerly made in this Journal (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 348) as to the possibility of Australian examples attributed to *Pitta mackloti* being specifically distinct from the New-Guinea bird of that name, Mr. Gould says that they are undoubtedly inseparable; and thus Mr. Krefft's proposed *P. digglesi* (*Ibis*, 1869, pp. 349, 350) falls to the ground. *Ptilonorhynchus rawnsleyi* (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1868, p. 348), though figured, is considered by Mr. Gould to be very possibly a hybrid between *P. holosericeus* and *Sericulus melinus*. The *Eopsaltria*, *Ptilotis cockerelli*, the *Sitella*, and the *Gallinula* are four new and fine species recently described by him in the 'Annals and Magazine

of Natural History' (4th ser. iv. pp. 108–110). Each of the species of *Casuarinus* is illustrated by two plates, one representing the birds at full length, the other the heads the natural size; and the author agrees with us (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 348) in regarding the *C. johnsoni* of Mr. Krefft as synonymous with the previously indicated *C. australis* of Wall. The other species, *C. uniappendiculatus*, it may be remembered, was originally described and figured by Dr. Bennett and Mr. Blyth in this Journal (*Ibis*, 1860, pp. 402, 403, pl. xiv.) from young birds living in captivity. It is the same as *C. kaupii*, Von Rosenberg (*J. f. O.* 1861, p. 44, pl. 1 bis), a name which appears to yield in priority to that applied by Mr. Blyth.

Of the 'Birds of Great Britain,' Part XV. published "August 1st, 1869," contains figures of:—

Goshawk.	Stone-Plover or Thick-knee.
House-Martin.	Purple Sandpiper.
Sky-Lark.	Harlequin Duck.
Short-toed Lark.	Golden-eye.
Greenfinch.	Pin-tailed Duck.
Rock-Thrush.	Curlew.
Missel-Thrush.	Greenshank.
Yellow-browed Warbler.	

While Part XVI., published "September 1st, 1869," comprises:—

Orange-legged Hobby.	Ruddy Sheldrake.
Barn-Owl.	Scaup Duck.
Alpine Swift.	Black Guillemot.
Red-breasted Flycatcher.	Kittiwake.
White's Thrush.	Little Gull.
Wood-Lark.	Storm-Petrel.
Common Bunting.	Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel.
Sheldrake.	

Several of these species now appear for the first time in a work on British ornithology; but Mr. Gould continues (most wisely, we think) to refuse admission to many stragglers—mostly of transatlantic origin, which from time to time make their appearance on our shores. We cannot, however, for want of room extend our remarks further; but, before we leave this subject, we must express our regret for a very careless misstate-

ment which was made on the last occasion of this beautiful work being noticed in these pages (*Ibis*, 1869, pp. 108, 109). Mr. Gould was then blamed for having omitted any reference to a passage in the work of an old author containing some information with respect to the Spoonbill. This was altogether wrong, for the information in question was duly and appropriately cited, and we have unreservedly to tender our apologies to Mr. Gould for having permitted a charge so entirely unfounded to be made.

Since we last noticed (*Ibis*, 1869, pp. 215, 216) Mr. Sharpe's 'Kingfishers'*, three more parts of it have appeared, in every way equal to their predecessors. By accident we, on a former occasion, stated that each part contained "six" plates, we should have said *eight*; and they are all very successful examples of Mr. Keulemans's handiwork. The author, as appears by a recent communication (Nov. 11, 1869) of his to the Zoological Society, was wrong in assigning the name *Corythornis vintsioides* (Eyd. & Gerv.) to the Madagascar species of that genus, which seems to be the true *Alcedo cristata* of Linnæus. Dr. Pucheran's argument (*R. Z.* 1861, pp. 337-341) seems to be unanswerable on this point; and if so, the common species of the African continent must bear the name of *C. cyanostigma* (Rüpp.) instead of *C. cristata*. *Dacelo fallax*, Schlegel, has been considered by Dr. Salvadori, in a paper to be noticed presently, entitled to generic separation, on account of its connecting the genera *Ceyx* and *Ispidina*; and, accordingly, it is here figured under the name of *Ceycopsis fallax*. *Haleyon cyanoleuca*, from Angola, is recognized as distinct from *H. senegalensis*. Though according a place in his letterpress to *Ceryle lugubris*, Mr. Sharpe is no doubt right in not deeming it worth a figure, so closely does it resemble *C. guttata*; on the other hand, the *C. sharpii* lately described by Mr. Gould (*Ann. & Mag. N. H.* 4th ser. iv. p. 271) seems to be as certainly a good species, and will bear the name of the ardent halcyonologist whose work we are noticing. It is very gratifying to observe that the custodians of the Museums of Basle and Berlin

* A Monograph of the *Alcedinidæ* or Kingfishers, by R. B. SHARPE. Part iv. March 1st, 1869; Part v. July 1st, 1869; Part vi. October 6th, 1869. London: roy. 8vo.

have entrusted the author with the type-specimens of *Ispidina ruficeps* and *Halcyon orientalis* respectively, in order that his plates might be drawn from them. We are glad to learn that the encouragement with which Mr. Sharpe has met in the course of the present work is such as to induce the hope that on its conclusion he may set about another similar monograph.

Captain F. W. Hutton's paper "On the Mechanical Principles involved in the Sailing Flight of the Albatros," printed in the 'Philosophical Magazine' for August last, was most kindly forwarded by the author for insertion in this Journal, which, as our readers will remember, was honoured by his former remarks on the same subject (*Ibis*, 1865, pp. 294-298)—remarks which have attracted considerable attention elsewhere. It appeared to us, however, on examination of the paper, that our pages would scarcely be a suitable vehicle for bringing to the notice of those best qualified to deal with them investigations in a great measure purely mathematical. We therefore handed over the manuscript to our more learned contemporary, who gladly availed himself of it. On our part, it seems due to the author that this fact should be stated, and we hope shortly to present such of our readers as do not happen to be mathematicians, with an intelligible abstract, not only of Captain Hutton's researches, but also of those which have lately been carried on and illustrated by most ingenious experiments by Professor Marey.

Dr. Bowden, in his 'Naturalist in Norway'*, sneers at the people of that country, because a work on its natural history "would not pay." As impartial judges we fear there is not much credit due to the land in which such a book as Dr. Bowden's could be published with profit. The author has but the very slightest smattering of information respecting the zoological part of his subject, and has taken but few pains to learn

* The Naturalist in Norway; or notes on the wild Animals, Birds, Fishes, and Plants of that Country. By Rev. J. BOWDEN, LL.D. &c. London: 1869. 8vo, pp. 263.

more. It is very easy for any bookmaker to bring Pontoppidan into ridicule; but such a bookmaker seldom recollects that the old bishop was at least not behind the science of the day, while the case may be very different with a consular chaplain.

Mr. Sterland's '*Birds of Sherwood Forest*'* is a very unpretending little volume, which we have much pleasure in recommending to our readers; for, though not altogether free from errors, it bears the mark of labour conscientiously applied, and many of the author's observations and reflections well deserve attention. In the district to which he has limited himself, Mr. Sterland has met with 172 species; but the authority of some of them seems to be rather questionable. For instance, there is the Golden Eagle included as a chance-visitor, but without anything to show that the bird seen and not obtained was not a Sea-Eagle, as it is far more likely to have been. Mr. Sterland assures us, on the strength of his own "careful and repeated observations," that it is the Barn-Owl which hoots, while the Tawny Owl screeches. We cannot attempt any explanation of this mistake (for mistake we believe it to be), since, though we must confess we have never enjoyed the acquaintance of any Sherwood-Forest Owls, we do not suppose that they depart from the habits of their brethren in the rest of England or on the Continent. Hitherto Sir William Jardine has been the only ornithologist in the world who has been so fortunate as to hear the Barn-Owl utter the cry which most observers, ourselves among them, have thought to be peculiar to the other species; but now Mr. Sterland ranges himself as a witness on the same side, and even goes further, we apprehend, than Sir William, by declaring that the Tawny Owl "screeches, and rarely, if ever, hoots"—this last assertion being one that will be contradicted by the experience of most of our readers. However, leaving this point as one on which we must "agree to differ," we must notice a few points of interest in Mr. Sterland's work, and herein especially mention his remarks on the oil-gland in

* *The Birds of Sherwood Forest. With notes on their Habits, Nesting, Migrations, &c.* By W. J. STERLAND. London: 1869. 8vo, pp. 244.

birds (pp. 205–213 and 236–239). He tells us that “some birds are furnished with only one oil-gland on the rump, while others have two”—the former being without exception such as are commonly termed “Land-birds,” and the latter “Water-birds,” with some additions. If the author is not acquainted with the researches of Nitzsch on this subject, he will perhaps thank us for referring him to the translation (chap. viii.) of that naturalist’s ‘Pterylography,’ lately published by the Ray Society, where he will see that this difference is rather one of name than of nature; since we believe that the gland, when it exists, is always single though often divided into two lobes. Mr. Sterland appends to his work a list of the species he has examined (249 in number) in the course of his investigations, and tells us as their result that he does not venture to assert that he is certain of the true use of the glands; but he has no hesitation in declaring “that they are simply excretory.” We bound to remark that his conclusion is not entirely satisfactory to us. If the glands are “excretory,” in the technical sense of the word, it is a very singular fact in the animal kingdom; and to say that they are “simply excretory,” precludes the idea of their being “secretory;” while it is, we think, manifest that they do secrete the matter they contain. The number of instances of the Black Redstart breeding in this country (*cf.* Ibis, 1865, pp. 21, 22) is added to by Mr. Sterland on what appears to be very satisfactory evidence, as is also the case with the Tufted Duck (*cf. tom. cit.* p. 446); but we cannot allow his supposed Garganey’s nest (p. 220) to pass unchallenged. The collector must indeed be “experienced” who could discriminate between the eggs of that bird and of a Teal. In conclusion, let us say that Mr. Sterland’s book is of a kind we should like to see many more, that his acquaintance with other than “British” birds has a perceptibly beneficial effect on the work, and, finally, that the volume possesses the great merit of a very good index.

Mr. Cecil Smith’s book* aims at being a more complete performance than that last noticed; for its author deems it neces-

* The Birds of Somersetshire. By CECIL SMITH, of Lydeard House, near Taunton. London: 1869. 8vo, pp. 643.

sary to give a full description of each species included. This is a work of supererogation, which might have been left out, and, by the further omission of a good deal not strictly germane to the matter, the space saved would have been far more usefully occupied by information as to the county and the birds in their special character as members of the fauna of a limited district; for of these subjects the reader knows as much or as little after having read the book as he did before. For a local work, nothing is more necessary than that local knowledge which a local writer only can sufficiently supply, and a local spirit ought therefore to pervade the whole. The want of this last is very conspicuous in Mr. Smith's volume; and it is a poor compensation that we should have instead a compilation of generalities, however industriously collected. Still, from the author's point of view, no doubt the work is well done; but it is a pity that his acquaintance with the published sources of information is not more extensive, since, in that case, we feel sure he would have found that many of the details he gives us were so commonly known as not to require repetition. We think, too, he might have mentioned the 'Birds of Somersetshire,' begun by Mr. W. D. Crotch in 1851 (though we believe that one part only of that work ever made its appearance), as well as the same gentleman's paper on the oology of the county, contained in the 'Proceedings' of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural-History Society ("Papers, &c." pp. 149-174). Mr. Smith (p. 628) says he has "been able to enumerate as many as 216 different species as having been found in the county;" but in the 'Proceedings' of the Society just mentioned (p. 27), we find a notice of a communication from Mr. Baker, of Bridgewater, to the effect that "233 [species] have been found in Somersetshire;" a word of explanation, therefore, as to why the larger number was not accepted would have been satisfactory. The most original of Mr. Smith's observations, and the best, are as to the benefits conferred on agriculturists by birds; and we are glad to see that he generally makes out a good case for our favourites.

What is nearly the most central part of the British Islands has hitherto been little, if at all known to ornithologists; Messrs.

Robert Gray and Thomas Anderson therefore deserve our thanks for telling us more about it, as they do in a little work * we have lately received from them. The "Preface" we can cordially recommend as containing just the sort of general information which an ornithologist unacquainted with the district wants, and we much wish we could make room for some extracts. As it is, we can only advise our readers to study it for themselves. A glance at any map of south-western Scotland will show that the position and coast-line of Galloway, Carrick, and Kyle must present great attractions to many birds, though certain species coming from the south are tempted from their straight course by the easterly trending of the Solway, and, following the rivers running into that estuary, are led across the Border counties to reappear on the east coast, whence they continue their voyage northward. Were the authors local faunists of the narrow school, we should, perhaps, be called upon to sympathize with their regrets at these perversions, but being catholic-minded they will no doubt, some day, pursue the truants and tell us how they fare in the shires of Roxburgh, Berwick, Selkirk, and Peebles—a group of counties well worth a monograph. To return, however, to the district with which this book has to do, we may observe that it includes the grand Ailsa Craig, which has been one of the largest nurseries of sea-fowl in the United Kingdom, and would be so again if its lord were not so indifferent to the privilege of possessing a spot of such interest, though, if we are not mistaken, one of the present authors has done his best to convince the noble owner of the short-sighted policy followed by himself and his agents—a policy which, if followed everywhere, would not only extirpate certain species of the birds of Ayrshire in particular, but of the birds of the air in general.

The publication in Europe of a work on the Natural History of two of the States of the American Union seems to be an interference on the part of the Old World with the affairs of the New, of the kind which the celebrated "Monroe Doctrine" was particularly intended to reprobate; yet we are sure that Dr.

* The Birds of Ayrshire and Wigtownshire, by ROBERT GRAY and THOMAS ANDERSON. Glasgow: 1869. 8vo, pp. 62.

Turnbull's 'Birds of East Pennsylvania and New Jersey'* will obtain an impartial reception from our American cousins. In style and treatment of the subject it resembles his 'Birds of East Lothian,' before noticed by us (*Ibis*, 1867, p. 373); but the interest of the present book is increased by the introduction of some vignettes copied from drawings by the great Alexander Wilson, found in his portfolio after his death, and now in the author's possession. We regret that we have not space to dwell longer upon this work, the result of several years' careful observation in a district which, lying between the eastern slopes of the Alleghanies and the Atlantic from Cape May to Sandy Hook, is remarkable for being frequented by a very large number of species (upwards of 340), though most of them use it only as a temporary resting-place on their migrations; but we must call especial attention to the concluding remarks on the "Birds which have disappeared," and we cannot omit from this imperfect notice to praise the care shown by Mr. Robert Gray in editing the book, the more so since that gentleman's modesty suppresses all mention of the fact.

2. GERMAN.

The most important ornithological works published in Germany since our last notices all refer to the avifauna of the eastern part of the Ethiopian region. Dr. Cabanis has laboured at the birds collected by the ill-fated Baron von der Decken during his travels †; Dr. von Heuglin has made good way in the publication of his long-expected 'Ornithology of North-eastern Africa' ‡; and Drs. Hartlaub and Finsch have issued the "Introduction" to their 'Ornithology of East Africa' §, the body of which work

* The Birds of East Pennsylvania and New Jersey, by WILLIAM P. TURNBULL, LL.D. &c. Glasgow: 1869. Roy. 8vo, pp. 62.

† Baron von der Decken's Reisen in Ost-Afrika. Vögel. Bearbeitet von J. CABANIS. Mit 18 Tafeln, nach der Natur gezeichnet von M. Th. von Heuglin. Roy. 8vo, pp. 19-52.

‡ Ornithologie Nordost-Afrika's, der Nilquellen- und Küsten-Gebiete des Rothen Meeres und des nördlichen Somal-Landes von M. TH. VON HEUGLIN. Lieferungen 1-11. Cassel: 1869. Roy. 8vo, 15 pls. and a Map.

§ Ornithologie Ostafrika's. Einleitung. Von G. HARTLAUB und OTTO FINSCH. Roy. 8vo, pp. 27.

is expected soon to appear, and is to form, it would seem (but of this we are not sure), the Fourth Volume of Von der Decken's 'Travels.' It is manifest that with the space now at our command we should be doing positive injustice to the erudition of these four distinguished ornithologists by attempting any off-hand criticisms. We limit ourselves here to recording the consummation, so far, of their labours; and we do this with greater contentment because we have good hope of shortly devoting an article especially to the consideration of them, which we trust will bring the whole subject of the ornithology of these interesting parts of Africa before our readers in a connected form.

It is proverbial that "great events from little causes spring;" and we have an example of the saying's truth now before us. Who would have thought that a direct consequence of the meeting of certain armed men one June day some three years ago in or around a hitherto obscure Bohemian village would be an event so remarkable as the publication of a '*Vogel-Fauna von Norddeutschland*'*? Yet such seems to be the case. The battle of Sadowa established a North-German Confederation, and a necessary product thereof is a book on the birds of the territory of that confederation! Dr. Borggreve appears to have performed his task with the usual conscientiousness of his fellow-countrymen; and his introductory observations (especially those on the interesting subject of the geographical distribution of birds within North-German limits) merit the fullest attention of those who are engaged in European ornithology.

The work of Baron Droste on the birds of the Isle of Borkum†

* *Die Vogel-Fauna von Norddeutschland. Eine kritische Musterung der europäischen Vogel-Arten nach dem Gesichtspunkte ihrer Verbreitung über das nördliche Deutschland. Unter Benutzung der einschlägigen Literatur und nach eigenen Beobachtungen bearbeitet von Dr. BERNARD BORGGREVE. Berlin: 1869. 8vo, pp. 157.*

† *Die Vogelwelt der Nordseeinsel Borkum. Nebst einer vergleichenden Uebersicht der in den südlichen Nordseeländern vorkommenden Vögel von FERD. BARON DROSTE-HÜLSHOFF. Münster: 1869. Roy. 8vo, pp. 389, 16. (Plate and Map.)*

affords ample proof of careful study both at home and abroad. Germany had hitherto scarcely possessed a work giving a really good account of its coast-frequenting species; to supply this want was the author's object, and in its attainment he has been very successful. Though he writes in a popular style, Baron Droste is far more than a mere popular writer; and the result is a volume which is acceptable not only to the sportsman or the ordinary reader, but may be taken up with advantage by the scientific ornithologist. The Baron sets an example which we should like to see followed on every occasion by our own local faunists; for he devotes some fifty or more pages to introductory matter, treating of the topography of the island and the general character of its ornithology at various seasons of the year*, thus fully justifying the expression of the title—"Bird-world." To this succeeds the usual catalogue of the species observed, with notes upon them; and here it becomes plain that the author is diligent to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what others have written on the subject. As some of our readers may not be able to put their fingers upon Borkum in the map, we may as well mention that it is one of the line of little islands that stretches along the North-sea coast of Holland and Germany, from the Zuyder Zee to the mouth of the Weser, and is the most westerly of the chain which is German, its near neighbour Rottum being Dutch, though, geographically speaking, it might be more correct to say that both were Frisian.

The old German Ornithologists' Society still survives, notwithstanding the secession a few years since of some of its most active members and the founding of a rival, having its headquarters at Berlin. The old Society had no fixed place of assembly, but led a vagrant life, just as does our British Association; and its seventeenth and latest meeting began at Cassel on the 18th and ended at Münden on the 21st of May last, under the direction of Baron Droste, of whom we have just spoken, as

* Some of this matter has before appeared in the '*Journal für Ornithologie*.'

we learn from the Report* we have received through that gentleman's kindness. His presidency over the Society is by no means an honorary one, two of the most important of the communications, besides several others of less account, made to the meeting having been from him. One of these is on the species of the genus *Numenius*, the author admitting eight as valid—*N. longirostris*, *N. australis*, *N. arquata*, *N. tenuirostris*, *N. minutus*, *N. borealis*, *N. hudsonicus*, and *N. phæopus*. These seem to us to be grouped by him rather artificially, the first four being separated by the colouring of the top of the head, which in them is uniformly spotted, while the rest have two dark unspotted longitudinal stripes divided by a pale and spotted middle space. We think that the character afforded by the buff colouring of the under wing-coverts, and especially of the axillary tuft, which is found in all the American species of the genus, and in them alone, coinciding as it does with the difference of geographical range, would have been a preferable diagnostic. The second of Baron Droste's communications to which we have especially referred is on the representation of bird-life in the most extreme north—the very neighbourhood of the pole. This of course must be a matter chiefly of surmise; and therefore opinions may well differ about it. We do not think it at all follows because a species is *circumpolar* that it is necessarily *polar*, as the author seems to do. Another good paper in the Report is that by Baron von König-Warthaussen on the eggs of species of *Sterna*.

Dr. Seidlitz's pamphlet†, a copy of which we have received, will hardly be appreciated by oologists unless they are far more than mere egg-collectors. It treats of highly interesting subjects, but gets into regions rather more sublime than those where the readers of the 'Ibis' are wont to tread. At any rate the word "Kohlenstofftheorie" carries with it a suggestion of chemical

* Bericht über die XVII. Versammlung der Deutschen Ornithologen-Gesellschaft. Cassel: 1869. 8vo, pp. 66.

† Die Bildungsgesetze der Vogeleier in histologischer und genetischer Beziehung und das Transmutationsgesetz der Organismen von Dr. GEORG SEIDLITZ. Leipzig: 1869. 8vo, pp. 58.

compounds perhaps not more agreeable than the powders with which the author's name will be associated by most of our friends; and accordingly, out of regard to their feelings, we abstain from saying any thing more about this publication, the scope of which can scarcely be said to come within the limits of pure ornithology.

3. FINNISH.

So far as we know, Professor Mäklin has struck out a new idea in proposing to make the capability of flight the basis of a scientific classification of birds*; and though we cannot agree with his suggestion, we fully admit its ingenuity and the pains he has taken in elaborating the notion. It is unquestionably true that this capability is in the highest degree influential on the bird's mode of life, and that it depends on the varying proportion which certain parts of the skeleton bear to each other; but we think that if the principles enunciated were carried out to extremes we should have some results that would contradict the most manifest natural affinities. To take only a couple of cases out of several that could be cited: no one can doubt that *Micropterus* truly belongs to the *Anatidæ*, or *Nestor* to the *Psittaci*; yet while these two forms are nearly or quite involatile, the groups of which they are unquestionably members include a large number of other forms that excel in the power of wing, as witness the Hooded Merganser, whose speed in mid-air is said to defy the best marksmen of North America, and the Macaws with pinions scarcely less powerful. The author's researches and remarks, however, well merit attention; for many of them are highly suggestive, and his plan for expressing algebraically the disposition for a more or less powerful flight is, to say the least, pretty, though we must observe that he omits from his equation any reference to the weight of the body, which, as it appears to us, ought to be included. One of the Professor's suggestions on a quite different subject is not very fortunate: he objects to the name *Pica* as being too much like *Picus*, while, as he rightly remarks, *Cleptes*,

* Vetenskapliga grunder för bestämmandet af fogelarternas ordningsföljd inom släkten och grupper. Af Dr. F. W. MÄKLIN, e. o. professor i zoologi. Helsingfors: 1867. 8vo, pp. 131.

proposed some years since by Dr. Gambel, is preoccupied in entomology ; but the author proposes (pp. 106, 107, notes) in its stead *Gelastes*, which he surely ought to have known was appropriated nearly as long since by Bonaparte to a section of *Laridæ*. If the ancients used *Pica* and *Picus* without danger of confusion, assuredly we moderns may be content to do the same.

Our friend Dr. Malmgren has kindly sent us copies of two ornithological papers published by him during the past year. The first appeared in the 'Öfversigt' of the Finnish Scientific Society's Transactions (vol. xii. no. 1), and relates to the occurrence in Finland of some birds respecting which the author has been so good as to address us a letter which will be found further on. The second is of more general interest, and consists of remarks on the "*Anseridæ*" of Finland and the Scandinavian Peninsula*. Five species of *Anser* and three of *Bernicla* are included, with copious bibliographical references to them ; and, except that we do not exactly see the necessity of elevating the group to the rank of a family, it gives us great pleasure to acquiesce in most of the Doctor's opinions, so that, in American phrase, we can pronounce him to be generally "sound upon the Goose!"

4. ITALIAN.

The great work of Signor Bettoni† has made great progress since we mentioned it (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 106), and has now advanced nearly to the completion of the second volume. The execution of the plates is almost as variable as their size, some being remarkably well drawn, while others we can hardly praise. It is to be regretted that the information contained in this work, a good deal of which is valuable, should not be also published

* Anteckningar om Finlands och Skandinaviska halföns *Anseridæ*. Af AND. JOH. MALMGREN. Helsingfors: 1869. (Separately printed from 'Notiser ur Sällskapet pro Fauna et Flora fennica förhandlingar,' x. pp. 389-401.)

† Storia naturale degli Uccelli che nidificano in Lombardia, ad illustrazione della raccolta ornitologica dei fratelli Ercole ed Ernesto Turati scritta da EUGENIO BETTONI con tavole litografate e colorate prese dal vero da O. Dressler. Tom. i. Fascicoli xvi.-xxvi. Tom. ii. Fascicoli i.-xxiii.

in a form more accessible to naturalists ; for, notwithstanding the liberality of the Counts Turati, these splendid volumes must necessarily be beyond the reach of all but the the most wealthy cultivators of our science, unless they live near some great library. It will be remembered that when we before noticed this work, we remarked on what seemed to us to be a novel statement with regard to *Anthus richardi*. The probable meaning of this has since been explained by our contributor, Mr. Howard Saunders (*Ibis*, 1869, p. 392).

Signor de Betta's Notes and Observations on the appearance of certain birds in Venetia*, though published several years since, have not long reached us. They treat of a most interesting subject and one too much neglected by many ornithologists ; but we should have wished that the author had, according to the title of his Essay, dwelt more on the *causes* which prompt the extraordinary and accidental visits of alien birds. It may, however, be well urged that on this point no one knows much, and it is only by the careful compilation and collection of facts that any of us can ever hope to know more. Regarded in this light the present work is useful, for it brings together records of the occurrence in Northern Italy of birds from almost all points of the compass, and certainly contains a good deal of interesting matter.

The paper by Dr. Salvadori to which allusion has been made above (p. 121) is a very careful revision of the genus *Ceyx*, published in the 'Atti delle Reale Accademia delle Scienze di Torino' (iv. pp. 440-476) and contains much more bibliographical matter than that of Mr. Sharpe (*P. Z. S.* 1868, pp. 587-599), so as to be indeed what it professes, a monograph of the group. As already mentioned the author proposes a new genus *Ceycopsis* (p. 447, note) for the *Dacelo fallax* of Schlegel (*Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk.* iii. p. 187), which is allied to *Ceyx*, but possesses a small additional (inner) toe—a better reason, we should say,

* Sulla straordinaria od accidentale Comparsa di alcune specie di Uccelli nelle Provincie Venete e sulle cause rispettive Note ed Osservazioni di EDOARDO DE BETTA. Venezia: 1865. 8vo, pp. 32. (Separately printed from 'Atti dell' Istituto Veneto di Scienze,' vol. x. ser 3.)

than can be given for most of the genera founded nowadays. The author recognizes the same number of species (ten) as did Mr. Sharpe, but arrives at this result by a different road. *Ceyx innominata* is proposed as a name for the commonly received *C. rufidorsa*, auctt., the Doctor retaining that name for what may possibly (we think) be the young of *C. tridactyla*; *C. sharpii* is described and figured as a new species from Borneo, while *C. uropygialis* is regarded as identical with *C. lepida*, and *C. philippensis*, Gould, is referred to the genus *Aleyone*. Whether they accept all these alterations or not, ornithologists will readily acknowledge that Dr. Salvadori has executed an admirable monograph.

5. PORTUGUESE.

The highly meritorious 'Jornal de Sciencias' of Lisbon, for August last, contains some Observations on and Additions to Mr. A. C. Smith's "Sketch of the Birds of Portugal" which appeared in our pages (*Ibis*, 1868, pp. 428-460). These are from the pen of Professor du Bocage, whose ready help was duly acknowledged by our contributor, and the Professor now expresses himself in terms of corresponding courtesy with respect to Mr. Smith. The additions to the Portuguese list are forty-four in number, to one of which, a common species in Alemtejo and Algarve, the *Alauda isabellina* of Temminck, the older name of *A. lusitana*, Gmelin, is restored; and the observations relate chiefly to *Aquila heliaca*, for the occurrence of which the author adduces complete evidence. He also remarks on an editorial note of our own (*tom. cit.* p. 435) with regard to this species; and we are much obliged to him for so doing, since it affords us the opportunity of mentioning that the statement therein contained was founded on a misapprehension.

Under the supervision of its able Director, Prof. du Bocage, the publication of a Catalogue of the ornithological collections in the National Museum at Lisbon has been begun, and the portion including the Parrots and Birds-of-Prey has through his kindness reached us*. This seems to have been drawn up by

* Museu Nacional de Lisboa. Secção Zoologica. Catalogo das Collecções Ornithologicas. *Psittaci—Accipitres*. Lisboa: 1869. 8vo, pp. 62.

Sen. José Augusto de Sousa, and is very well done. The condition of this Museum reflects much credit on all who are concerned in its management, since the number of species belonging to the former group contained in it is 204, and of the latter 223, in each case a very large proportion of the described species for any museum to possess. No doubt the still extensive foreign dominions of the Crown of Portugal in some degree explain this great wealth; but the advantage they confer would be undoubtedly lost were there not able and willing spirits at home to aid the collection of the treasures.

6. AUSTRALASIAN.

We have to chronicle the further progress made by Mr. Diggles since we last noticed his work* (Ibis, 1868, p. 348); but it does not seem necessary for us, with our present scarcity of space, to comment particularly upon it, and we will only repeat our best wishes for the success of this enterprising author.

Our antipodes are setting the world a good example. Four scientific societies established in as many provinces of the colony, have incorporated themselves with the New-Zealand Institute, in whose 'Transactions and Proceedings' the various papers communicated to their meetings are published, at a greater or less length, as these contributions seem to deserve. In the first volume (which, through the kindness of a friend there, we have lately received) ornithology makes a more than respectable show. Mr. Walter Buller has some "Notes on Dr. Finsch's review of the Essay on the Ornithology of New Zealand" which it was our privilege first to bring to the notice of our European brethren (Ibis, 1867, p. 132), and, taking his remarks *seriatim*, replies to the criticisms of that learned authority with a considerable degree of success. We can here only mention a few points:—*Hieracidea brunnea* has been found to be the immature stage of *H. novæ-zelandiæ*; further evidence is adduced for the distinctness of *Anthornis auriocula* from *A. melanura*; *Ardea novæ-hollandiæ* has been lately obtained from the North Island, and a remarkably

* The Ornithology of Australia, by SYLVESTER DIGGLES. Brisbane, Queensland. Imp. 4to. Parts xvi.–xx.

small species of Bittern, only seven inches in height, and probably the "Little Bittern" of Mr. Ellman (Zool. p. 7469), has been discovered on the west coast of the South Island; the remarks of Mr. Mackay (Ibis, 1867, pp. 144, 145) on *Notornis mantelli* are said to refer to *Strigops habroptilus*, though it must be mentioned here that that gentleman positively assured us he knew both birds well; a new species of *Ocydromus* from the south-west coast of the South Island is described under the name of *O. nigricans*; the so-called *Mimus carunculatus* (cf. Ibis, 1867, p. 132), subsequently called by Dr. Finsch (J. F. O. 1867, pp. 342, 343) *Anthochara bulleri*, is said to be identical with *A. carunculata*; *Creadion carunculatus* and *C. cinereus* are stated to be totally distinct; and, finally, *Spheniscus undinus* has been procured on the west coast of the province of Wellington. Appended to this paper is a careful translation of Dr. Finsch's review, which appeared in the 'Journal für Ornithologie' for 1867 (pp. 305-347), and further on in the volume is a reprint of Mr. Buller's original 'Essay.' Captain Hutton contributes two lists of the birds of the Great and Little Barrier-Islands, on the latter of which he observed a species of nocturnal habit, but, not being able to obtain an example, he cannot even conjecture what kind of bird it was. Several communications by various other authors treat more or less incidentally of the species of *Dinornis*, and especially of the period at which they existed, concerning which much doubt seems to prevail among those persons in the colony best fitted to form an opinion. Altogether it is most satisfactory to find that, amid the distractions of war, our fellow subjects in New Zealand have time to devote to science.

IX.—Letters, Announcements, &c.

WE have received the following letters, addressed to "To the Editor of 'The Ibis'":—

Agra, June 6*, 1869.

SIR,—'The Ibis,' for April has just come to hand, and it contains several passages in regard to which I wish to offer some remarks.

* [This letter did not reach us until after that of the 12th of the same month, which was printed in our last number.—ED.]